411 "Their weapons comprise arrows, spear and club, and those who cannot procure iron spears attach a sharp piece of deer antler to the end of a pole. Their occupations are limited to a little hunting; 721 to fishing, to which end in some places they customarily make nets of 262 [227] garabata fiber; to gathering a few wild fruits, and to loafing. For this reason their food consists of a little meat from the wild animals they hunt, fish and fruits. These latter they gather abundantly during some months of the year, although the variety is limited mainly to the fruit of the chañar, mistol, and algarrobo. Fish is also plentiful in certain seasons. Game, on the other hand, is relatively scarce but they eat anything which is in any way similar to meat with relish, such as small lizards, crickets, locusts and mice (1) so that although

1. That is: cavies, which are very good to eat when fat (J.P.)

they do get rather thin in certain months by reason of the scarceness ● 231 of food, no one dies of starvation. Some, but [600] very few, raise sheep and other domestic animals. In any event, when times are hard, and even when they are not so hard, the frontier Christians have pretty large cattle herds, herds which often help the Matacos out when food is scarce, and this with little effort. Most of them refrain from 241 agricultural pursuits because that would involve too much work (in the Mataco opinion), except for some perfunctory sowing of pumpkins which grow with astonishing ease in those parts and in such abundance and such high quality that some frontier people, with a little exaggeration, used to tell me that they were so delicious that it was a pleasure to see and taste them and that their honey-like sweetness was such that when one wished to cut one open the knife would become stuck fast in them. I observed that while these people were telling me about the pumpkins their mouths would begin to water, so much so that I was almost persuaded to go off and live in those places where such delicious and mellifluous pumpkins grew and multiplied so easily."

273 "From wild fruits and even from pumpkins and watermelons they 579 make a fermented beverage which they like very much but which intoxicates them powerfully; and in their fury they join in some very bloody frays. This is why the women abstain completely from drinking that beverage and hide their husbands' weapons during those periods

leather bracelet, which they continue to wear until, it is said, they give it to the first man who wins their favor. They knit shirts out of twine or in double thickness, very closely knit and yet elastic, which look like coats of mail and have no sleeves, and are garnished in various patterns with pieces of clam shell. These shirts are particularly useful [181] in their fights and as protection against the thorns of the forest, but the Indians have only a few of them.

Other ornaments are made of feathers, especially of the ostrich [rhea--Translator], with which the women deck their foreheads, waists, shoulders, wrists and ankles. The men put on much the same gear when they are about to fight, go to feasts or to treat a sick person, as will later be shown.

The women themselves also weave the wool gathered from the few sheep they possess and arrange the natural wool colors in regular patterns of stripes or squares. They do not know how to make more ornamental figures.

In order to weave they stick four forked pieces of wood into the ground in the form of a rectangle, place a pole across each end to which they affix the warp threads and with a wooden blade about a hand breadth long thread and tamp the wool into place.

They call "weaving " potzin; the "loom" noccaléi, and the "threads" huoléi. These words, which have not the least affinity with the corresponding Spanish words, assure us that the Indians did not learn weaving from the Spaniards -- not that one should lay great stock either by similarities or by the lack of them in words to buttress a judgment of this nature (on the contrary, it happens that the Mataco always do all they can to keep from adopting foreign words to express new things, preferring to use their own words with small changes) but the fact of the matter is that we are not here confronted by one of these circumlocutions. Another possible cause for error might be found in the great difficulty which they have to pronounce words as we do. Furthermore there is the habit of taking Spanish words and modifying them to suit their own language as when they make from "cabra" [goat--Translator] caila, and from Pedro, Peiló.

All work having to do with carrying, making tents, making pots, cooking, weaving, looking for roots and making nets, is women's work. Hunting, fishing, the making of weapons, warring, are men's business. Looking for honey in the forests, where it is abundant, and collecting fruit are activities common to both sexes. I suppose that

of view this practice of no quarter for prisoners has far reaching effects upon racial distribution, for the victors, in either pitched battles or in contests of intelligence, take the place of and completely supplant the vanquished, thus carrying out that process of selection, which is basic to the Darwinian theory, and which is behind the gradual betterment of the racial strains in the whole organic kingdom, to which end all struggle for life may be reduced to the expression mors tua vita mea.

It has been said that the American Indians have been avenged of the conquest and of our introduction of smallpox by making a present to the Europeans of venereal disease.

I think that this is one of those assertions which are often made without sufficient proof, and which can easily be disproved. I have been told that qualified researchers have shown that this disease harks back to remote antiquity. Popular opinion (often wrong) has as a matter of course claimed it to be of French origin; and historians, in all seriousness, attribute it to the period in which Charles VIII invaded Italy. Whoever cares to accept this ought first to take a look at Chapter XV in the Book of Leviticus.

Actually, this disease is unknown among the Chaco Indians; or at least this was so until it was introduced by the white invaders. And although this could be explained by saying that a plague tends to disappear or to become attenuated after it has run its course and harvested those who had a predisposition for it -- which is the scientific theory held today by the new school of medicine and which in fact, so it seems to me, jibes with the Darwinian Theory of selection -- the facts are as I have reported them. What is more, in those localities where this disease exists the Indians are quite as prone to fall to it as are others, while African Negros seem either not to catch it or else to get it in a mild form. This is common knowledge among the gauchos of the plains [219] wherever the presence of these two races has made the observation of this fact possible. I set this down here in case it may be of use to those who have not observed it or who are ignorant of it.

These Indians are nomadic, as we know, and do not have domestic animals. The few they do have have come to them from us, and this exception merely substantiates the rule.

Even at the time of the initial conquest of these lands the white invaders were surprised at the lack of domestic animals among the Indians, and this not in one or two places but over the whole continent, a state of affairs such that it has attracted the attention of historians and philosophers, from Robertson to Humboldt, and from the latter to the most modest of travelers. 231

In point of fact nomadism has existed and still exists in Asia, nevertheless domestic animals were and are there much in evidence: the horse and the camel, for example. Have not the Lapps, the Samoyeds, and the Chukchee tamed the reindeer? And have the natives of the Kamchatka peninsula not tamed the dogs they hitch to their sleighs?

To what then are we to attribute this indubitable inferiority in the American nomad? Certainly not to the race's lack of ability -- an answer which might arise from a superficial and cursory acquaintance with them -- for if that were so then the Greenlanders ought not to have domestic animals, as the American Eskimo do not, despite being of the same stock and having the bison, similar to our ox and tamable, in their midst in the polar region.

Furthermore, the matter of domesticating animals which are tamable does not present any sort of problem requiring superior capabilities. Actually it cannot be denied that these nomads do have something similar to domestic animals, for the truth is that the Chaco Indians have always had and certainly have now either a tame ostrich [rhea--Translator], or a chuña, or a charata (woods chicken), and we know that the barkless dog was found to be in domesticity among them.

It is my opinion that the lack of domestic animals is due to three special circumstances existing on this continent and among its inhabitants. These circumstances are: physical conditions, social conditions, and the scarcity or complete lack of tamable animals.

It is well known that on this continent, owing to certain quite easily explainable physical causes, it is colder than it is in the old world at the same geographic latitude, which makes the temperate zone here much smaller than over there. For this reason it must have been much more difficult to care and get sufficient fodder for domestic animals up there among the inhabitants of North America where the bison is to be found.

Even had this difficulty not existed, the social organization 231
of the American nomads made the keeping of domesticated animals well nigh impossible. In [220] effect, and in spite of the fact that one nation might occupy an immense area, yet it would be divided into small tribes who owned sway over relatively small territories and were (as their survivors still are) continually at war amongst themselves. It follows from this that there was no security, which is an indispensable condition for the raising of animals and for any other peaceful occupation. Even at the present time the Chaco Indians, although they are acquainted with our domestic animals and do on occasion try to raise them, do not do so on a worthwhile scale because the mere fact of their possessing them is a temptation for their neighbors to invade and despoil them. If social life had somehow got to the point of compelling these Indians to gather into large groupings, then, given the range of their vast territories and despite their being nomadic and continually at war, it would always have been easy for them to protect their animals, when invaded, by fencing them into inclosures.

Can the Indians of these parts have been cannibals? This is 266
a question which always arises when we have dealings with savages like these.

In America cannibalism has had adherents among "Hebrews and Samaritans," among "Barbarians and Christians." The savage Caribs and the cultured Mexicans topped off the very best dishes of their cuisine with human flesh. The peaceful Peruvians used not to disdain stews of human blood for their religious feast days, in which they would knead corn bread with the blood taken from the foreheads of babes -- what pious butchers were the gentle and beautiful women devotees of that nation's religion.

In this region of the Chaco, although cannibalism may have been practiced, temporibus illis, (which cannot be proved), at the present time it is either non-existent or else must be considered reduced to its very lowest terms. 727

I shall say nothing about the custom of drinking aloja from 264
the scalp of a prisoner which has been converted into a propitiating cup of vengeance and victory.

I have seen them drink avidly of the blood of cattle 262
slaughtered for our use, but they do not feed exclusively on cattle 272

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI 12
Choroti SK 6

M T C 224 C [262]

rarely succeed in killing a tapir, a deer, or a wild pig. Besides, the deer is an animal of which the Choroti have a superstitious fear, and its flesh is never eaten by them; when they kill one, they only keep the hoofs, which are used as magical rattles, the leg-bones, of which instruments used for ceremonial blood-letting are made, and the skin which is used for different purposes. Of birds, as I have stated before, the ostrich is especially appreciated both on account of its flesh and its plumes, which play a great role as personal ornaments and to which magical power is ascribed. In hunting the ostrich the Choroti, like other Chaco tribes, avail themselves of the trick of binding palm leaves together and placing them on the head and shoulders so as to resemble a young tree. Disguised in this way, the Indians generally succeed in getting within easy range of the shy bird, and are thus able to bring it down with their arrows. Another trick of which the Indians often make use in hunting is that of imitating the cry of certan animals and birds by means of round wooden whistles, particularly invented for this purpose. With the same whistles, which are supposed to possess magic power, they also imitate the supposed whistling sound of the spirits, which are thereby frightened away.

T 224

The Tobas are much more skilled hunters than the Choroti and the Mataco, and, at least in Bolivia, the country inhabited by these Indians is comparatively rich in game. Thus tapirs, deer, and wild pigs, of which latter there are two varieties, are frequent in the forests, and the Tobas hunt them eagerly, using bows and arrows as well as lances as weapons. All Indians, and particularly the Tobas, are expert in stalking ainmals; the latter are thereby aided by their dogs which are specially trained for the hunting of the wild pig. Even the jaguar and the puma are hunted by the Tobas with dogs.

M T C 231

Of domestic animals the Chaco Indians keep dogs, sheep and goats as well as fowls. [1] Horses were long ago introduced among the Tobas who

[1] Nordenskiöld, when treating of the domestic animals of the Bolivian Indians in his *Ethnography of South America seen from Mojos in Bolivia*, p. 114, amongst other things mentions that in Mojos only the civilized Indians keep cattle, which have been introduced by the whites, and adds the following erroneous statements as regards the Chaco Indians: »In the Chaco, on the other hand, *even the independent Indians have cattle* which play an important part for them. *The Indians keep no sheep or goats.* I wish to point out that neither the Tobas nor the Choroti, nor the Mataco on the Pilcomayo keep cattle. On the other hand, sheep and goats are kept by *all* Pilcomayo tribes and, as far as I know, by all other Chaco Indians, except perhaps some savage tribes in the interior of the unknown Chaco.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI 12
Choroti SK 6

soon became skilled riders, but among the other Pilcomayo tribes they are rare. Before the Chaco Indian became acquainted with the white man, the dog was the only domestic animal known to him. These half-starved, fierce, and treacherous dogs are a real nuisance in the Mataco and the Choroti villages to the white traveller who has to stay among the Indians, because in their hunger they are always on the alert to rob him of edible things, among which they include not only his provisions, but also his saddlegear, boots, and other leather goods. Although the Mataco and the Choroti treat their numerous dogs badly and evidently have little use for them even as watches, yet in a way they regard them as members of the tribe. They never kill a dog, however old and wretched it may be, and when it dies they lament over it just as they lament over a fellow-tribesman. This curious practice is due to superstitious reasons, fear of the spirit of the dog. Like many other South American Indians, the natives of the Chaco believe that the souls of their dead tribesmen may reincarnate themselves in the dogs.

Only the Tobas, who are culturally superior to the rest of the Pilcomayo tribes, feed their dogs properly and have real use for them both in hunting and as watchdogs. But even these dogs are of uncertain breed and by nature so savage that for my own part I failed in my attempts to train them according to European methods.

These general remarks on the material culture of the Pilcomayo tribes may suffice as a basis for the following description of their social customs and their intellectual culture. I shall repeatedly have occasion to touch upon the ergology of the Indians in describing their magical ornaments and amulets, as well as various objects used at religious ceremonies.

/212 cont./

755 756 783 796 The follow-up to the ceremony was what we could call a general disinfection. The medicine men began by dusting each other off, making their rattles jingle right against the bodies of their colleagues, and blowing on the tops of their heads or the napes of their necks, as is done for illness. Then all the men, women, and children who had attended the ceremony as spectators were summoned. They sat down and the medicine men and medicine women /given in English/ came to pass their feather brooms over their bodies, to blow on their heads, and to make the rattles jingle along their bodies. These rites were carried out just as scrupulously for the children as for the adults.

/213/ My friend Sanchez was the object of particular pains; after the chief medicine man in person had blown over him, he was assisted by four medicine men, two of whom blew and sang over him, while the other two shook rattles, bells, and maracas.

Those of the medicine men who were not occupied with the disinfecting turned halfway around and repeated all the gestures which they had previously carried out. From time to time one or another again left the row to mow down the grass and furiously engulf the illness. The whistles succeeded each another at intervals which were ever closer together, and the rattles were shaken with more energy and insistence.

The ceremony was over when all the members of the community were considered relieved of the evil influences with which they had been impregnated.

Notes

[164] [231] 1. The illness to be expelled was hoof-and-mouth disease, with which the livestock was then stricken, and which had had unfortunate consequences on the health of the people. Several who had eaten contaminated meat had fallen ill.

Choroti SI6
Mataco SI7
Güisnais

Ci 301 302 171 /321 cont./

Doubtless through being very close to the Toba, they pierce their ear lobes, in which they put pieces of wood, and they also stain their faces.

Ci 648 [464] In the expeditions to the Paraguay they have never shown themselves to be hostile to the whites and soldiers; rather they have lent important services and it was they who saved the life of Señor Touvar and his companions when they became separated from the expedition. Therefore the reduction of these Indians to civilized life would be very profitable.

Güisnáis

M 131 101 These Indians occupy the western bank of the Pilcomayo facing the Choroti Indians and southwest of the region occupied by the Mataco. The geographic degree of their territory, with a very slight difference, is the same as that of the Choroti, since they are separated from the latter only by the river bed.

M 101 181 241 231 197 They are a division of the Mataco; they speak the latter's language with very little difference; their customs are nearly identical and their number quite small. They are of a peaceful nature like the Choroti, and like them, they plant gourds and other vegetables. They also devote themselves to the raising of domestic animals, such as cows, horses, sheep, goats, and chickens.

M 167 177 464 224 Even the Güisnáis frequently come out for jobs in the Argentine Republic, from where they also bring back weapons, in order to use them particularly in the woods, killing birds, wild boars, deer, and other quadrupeds.

M 124 771 776 [756] They have more religious ideas than other tribes, and it seems that their great-grandparents might have belonged to some former Argentine mission, because, more than others, they recognize a true divinity. /322/ Nonetheless in their great ignorance they confuse ideas, and in great fear they recognize in sorcerers a power that they do not have.